DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY P Schmelzer DATE 7/2/85
RDS ☐ or XDS ☐ EXT. DATE
REASON(S)
TO AUTH.
E.O. 12356 EXCEPTIONS MARKINGS ☒
UNCLASSIFIED ☐ RELEASABLE ☒
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P.A. or FOI EXEMPTIONS

R (124)

THE FIGHTERS INVOLVED

Summary: The Administration proposes to sell:

1) To Israel -- 75 F-16s for $1.5 billion, and 15 F-15s for $400 million.

2) To Egypt -- 50 F-5s for $400 million.

3) To Saudi Arabia -- 60 F-15s for $2.5 billion.

Their Capabilities. In order to evaluate the proposed sale, it is necessary to know what each aircraft can do and its main mission. This will help in understanding the factors involved in the sale.

1) THE F-16 (to be sold only to Israel) -- The General Dynamics fighter is a single seat, single engine, advanced lightweight, all-weather, multi-purpose fighter. It was designed to permit high sortie rates with a rapid turnaround capability, minimum manpower and logistics requirements, and an exceptional air combat maneuvering performance along with a good air-to-surface weapons delivery capability. Representative combat radius is roughly 600 nautical miles. Top speed is in the Mach 2 range.

2) THE F-15 (to be sold to Israel and Saudi Arabia) -- The Mc Donnell-Douglas F-15 is an advanced single-pace, fixed wing, twin engine aircraft designed specifically as an all-weather air superiority fighter with a secondary air-to-ground mission. It combines advanced radar, fire control, and electronic countermeasure systems with a mix of air-to-air missiles and a 20 mm cannon for use in air-to-air engagements. Representative combat radius is roughly 600 nautical miles. Top speed is in excess of Mach 2.

3) THE F-5 (to be sold only to Egypt) -- The Northrop fighter is a reliable, easily maintainable modern twin engined, single place, aircraft designed with simplicity of operation and minimum support in mind. Its mission is to operate primarily as an air superiority fighter for local air defense in a clear air mass environment. A secondary role is that of close air support of ground forces. Representative combat radius is roughly 250 nautical miles. Top speed is in the Mach 1.5 range.

NOTE: Combat radius or range figures depend heavily on how the aircraft is configured (i.e., extra fuel tanks and ordnance carried) and the mission flown. Combat radius decreases sharply when jet aircraft are operated for a prolonged period at low altitude or in afterburner. The representative figures presented above are for a so-called hi-lo-hi mission with all aircraft carrying the same ordnance weight.

DELIVERY SCHEDULE

The production rates and availability of these aircraft, and their supporting equipment, vary considerably. Also, training is a factor in the ability of the respective countries to absorb the aircraft.

Here is a summary of the proposed timetable for fulfillment of the sale:

1) Israel -- Delivery of the F-15s would begin in the third quarter of 1981 with five aircraft, and total delivery would be completed in the first quarter of 1982. Israel would begin receiving F-16s in the fourth quarter of 1981 with five aircraft, and thereafter deliveries would be 10 per quarter until the final 10 are delivered in the third quarter of 1983.

2) Egypt - Delivery of the F-5s would begin in the third quarter of 1978 with 10 aircraft, to be used initially for training in the United States. Subsequent deliveries are 20 in 1979, 10 in 1980 and 10 in 1981.

3) Saudi Arabia -- Delivery of the F-15s would begin with ten in the U.S. for training during 1981, with delivery in the country beginning in 1982 and extending into 1984.

MIDDLE EAST ORDER OF BATTLE

	ISRAEL	EGYPT	SYRIA	IRAQ	JORDAN	SAUDI ARABIA	LIBYA
Army Personnel	138,000 1/	225,000	200,000	160,000	61,000	45,000	22,000
Main Battle Tanks	3,000	1,850	2,500	1,350	320	475	1,200
Artillery	1,010	1,600	600	700	261	-	155
Navy Personnel	5,000	20,000	2,500	3,000	160	1,500	2,700
Primary Naval Combatants	19	32	14	10	-	4	6
Air Force Personnel	21,000	25,000	25,000	15,000	6,650	15,000	4,500
Combat Aircraft	549	365	395	369	78	137	162
Air Defense Personnel	- 2/	75,000	- 3/	10,000	-	-	-
HAWK SAM's	90	0			On Order	Some	0
SA-2 SAM's	0	360	24 SA-2/3 Batteries	Some	0	0	
SA-3 SAM's	0	200		Some	0	0	60 (SA 3,
SA-6 SAM's	0	75	14 Batteries	25	0	0	
CROTALE SAM's	0	0	0	0	0	0	60
RAPIER SAM's	0	0	0	0	0	Some	0
CHAPPARAL	Some	0	0	0	0	0	0

1/ 375,000 After Mobilization
2/ Israeli Air Defense Personnel are in Air Force
3/ Personnel provided by Army and Air Force

ENCLOSURE (1) TO
S/NODIS SA-2E